

## **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 28, 2003**

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission for Women was held on July 28, 2003 in Room 830, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California.

In absence of a quorum, President Jernigan called a meeting of the Committee of the Whole to order at 10:20 a.m., followed by introductions. The following Commissioners were present for the roll call:

President Jernigan  
Treasurer Lesser  
Commissioner Cooperman  
Commissioner Duba  
Commissioner Morgan  
Commissioner Rodriguez

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Jernigan reported the following:

- On July 25, 2003, members of the Commission met with 14 members of the *Leadership Development for Muslim Women, a Multi Regional Project for Near East, South and, Southeast Asia*. The women were invited to the United States under the auspices of the State Department's International Visitor Program.

The distinguished guests were visiting from Bahrain, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank, and Yemen. Among them, the women were writers, researchers, print journalists, a popular news anchor for Channel 11 on Egyptian television, a lawyer, an information and communications technology specialist, the Chief of Staff of the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Trade, a public health specialist for Saudi Aramco Medical Services, a professor of English, and the Head of Co-med Medical Company, as well as General Manager and Owner of *Physician's Magazine*.

- She discussed several *L.A. Times* articles regarding: the release of 24 convicted child molesters since a Supreme Court ruling that struck down a California law on the statute of limitations on prosecuting sex offenders; a report on Welfare-to-Work reforms in L.A. County which emphasizes fast employment rather than education and real-world training leaving many participants with bleak prospects of ever rising above the poverty line; and an article about California Supreme Court Justice Janice Rogers Brown, who was nominated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit by President Bush.

(Commissioners Creary and Perkins joined the meeting, constituting a quorum).

### **STAFF REPORT**

Staff reported that Denise Melgar, Executive Secretary, Executive Office, Board of Supervisors has offered to translate the commission brochure into Spanish at no cost, with an estimated completion date of August 18.

Commissioners Rodriguez and Morgan will attend the Glendale City Council meeting on July 29, 2003 to speak in support of creating a Commission for Women in the City of Glendale.

### **INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS FOR 2003-2004**

Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Second District, thanked President-elect Ruth Jernigan for her many years of hard work and advocacy for women and children, and specifically for her work as second district appointee on the Los Angeles County Commission for Women. She then swore in Ruth Jernigan as President for 2003-2004.

Supervisor Burke applauded Treasurer-elect Lesser for her four years of work with the Commission for Women, and for her 30 years of volunteer work in crime, alcohol, drug prevention for the youth of L.A. County. On behalf of Supervisor Knabe, Supervisor Burke swore in Charlotte Lesser as Treasurer for 2003-2004.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion of Commissioner Cooperman, seconded by Commissioner Duba, and unanimously carried, with Treasurer Lesser abstaining, the minutes of June 14, 2003 were approved with the following changes:

On page 5, under Committee Reports:

Commissioner Creary would like the records to reflect that, at the July 14, 2003 meeting, she requested that an action item to support the Dr. Keith Black/ Cedar's Sinai Stroke Awareness Program be on the July 28, 2003 agenda. (The President asked staff to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting.)

Under 5K Run/Walk Subcommittee:

Commissioner Creary requested the minutes to reflect that she passed out a "copy" of the artwork donated by artist Noni Higgins to be raffled off at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Run/Walk for Girls-at-Risk, and not the actual artwork as notated in the minutes.

On page 6, under Community Outreach:

Commissioner Perkins requested the minutes reflect more of the historical relationship between the Los Angeles Women's Appointment Collaboration and the Los Angeles County Commission for Women. Commissioner Perkins also requested the minutes reflect that when she recommended to the Women's Appointment Collaboration that Vice President Mariajimenez be appointed to their Board, she made her recommendation of Vice President Mariajimenez as a person active in the community, and not as a representative of the Commission for Women. She also requested that Angela "Reddick" be changed to "Reddock" on page 6 when discussing the African-American Public Policy Institute at USC.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked that the minutes reflect that the meeting held at the Chicana Service Action Center with the Department of Children and Family Services was regarding information about the program *Families to Families*.

**SET ITEM – PRESENTATION BY KELLY HAYES-RAITT: "FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE WOMEN OF IRAQ"**

Kelly Hayes-Raitt, Commissioner, Santa Monica Commission on the Status of Women, discussed her two recent trips to Iraq. She shared with the Commission a timeline from the first Gulf War in 1991 to the March 2003 War, and the ramifications of post-war destruction in Iraq. She began by sharing photographs on the impact of war on women and children in Iraq.

- She visited Iraq for 10 days in February, 5 weeks before the war began.
- During her time there, she spoke with many women and children at the neighborhood bomb shelter where more than 400 Iraqis were killed in the 1991 war; at a pediatric hospital where children are not able to get the medicines they need because of continued U.N. sanctions; and in the streets and shops of Baghdad.
- She stated that women and children in Iraq are still trying to recover from the 1991 war when sewage and water plants, as well as electricity grids were destroyed.
- Because of problems with water purity, children in Iraq have, on average, diarrhea 14 days out of the month. Since the March 2003 War began, childhood diarrhea has tripled beyond that. Additionally, many children are suffering from third degree burns because families are burning kerosene for cooking as the power grid is extremely unreliable as yet.
- Throughout both her visits, she was consistently asked to bring back a message of peace to the people of the United States.

After a question and answer period, President Jernigan thanked Kelly Hayes-Raitt for her presentation.

**REPORT ON THE 34<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMISSIONS  
FOR WOMEN CONVENTION IN WILMINGTON, DELAWARE**

President Jernigan thanked the Commission for allowing her the opportunity to represent the Commission at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual NACW Convention held July 16-20. This year's theme was "Shaping the Future Together."

Her report included the following information:

- She commended the Delaware Commission for Women on a well-organized event, where attention to detail was paid to everything from excellent transportation service for guests to exciting and informative speakers and workshops.
- Delaware is the second smallest state in the union, yet it is one of the most progressive states where most of the elected officials are women including Governor Ruth Ann Minner, as well as many legislators and judges. Interestingly, Delaware unemployment is 3% versus California's 6.5-7%.
- She commended Governor Minner for her outstanding leadership and compassion.
- One of the excellent speakers was United States Senator Joe Biden, who has been a leader in the Senate more than 25 years. The Senator has a proven commitment to women issues and the disadvantaged. He stated that he had recently traveled to Iraq, and as he always advocates for women's rights, he assured the delegates that there will be strong language in Iraq's new constitution that protects the rights of women.
- Ruth Jackson, from Utah, was elected the new President and delegates also elected a very diverse Board.

**CONSIDER POSTPONING THE SEPTEMBER 22, 2003 COMMISSION MEETING  
DUE TO ADDITIONAL WORK LOAD FOR THE 5<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL RUN/WALK FOR  
GIRLS-AT-RISK**

On motion of Commissioner Creary, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, and unanimously carried, the Commission approved postponing the September 22, 2003 Commission meeting due to additional work load for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Run/Walk for Girls-at-Risk.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Media/Public Relations Committee**

Commissioner Morgan passed out the latest 5K Run/Walk for Girls-at-Risk Press Release which gives notice of all of the pertinent information about the event, including

sponsor information, registration instructions and phone numbers for volunteers and run/walk participants.

### **Older Women's Issues Committee**

Commissioner Morgan informed the Commission of the *Mid-Life and Older Women's Conference* that was held at Cerritos Center from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 26. Commissioner Mummey conducted the workshop "A Woman's Legal Rights," and Commissioner Morgan mediated the workshop "The Color of Money." Other workshops were held on strengths and needs for ethnic populations, memory and motivation, and information about living alone and care-giving. The Commission for Women was a sponsor of this event, along with Supervisor Knabe, the L.A. Commission on Aging, the American Association of University Women, and Blue Shield America, among others.

### **5K Run/Walk Subcommittee**

Commissioner Duba reported that today at 12:30 p.m. the 5K Run/Walk Subcommittee will meet. She asked Commissioners to distribute the 5K Run/Walk flyers and stated that an additional 6,000 flyers will be mailed out by mid-August. She also informed staff that CW summer intern Christopher Harris is designing the Run/Walk's T-shirt.

Commissioner Perkins suggested staff write a letter to Los Angeles County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman and Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca thanking them for their past participation and support of the 5K Run/Walk events, and to invite them to participate again this year either by signing up individuals, organizing a run or walk team, or staffing a table at the race.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Perkins encouraged the Commission to support the Public Policy Institute, which will be accepting applications at the end of August 2003 through October 2003. Staff will distribute applications and other pertinent information about the Public Policy Institute to Commissioners when it is received.

Commissioner Creary reported that she and Commissioner Rodriguez attended a preview of the *Magdalene Sisters*, a documentary charting several years in the lives of four young girls who were rejected by their families and abandoned to the Catholic Church in 1960s Ireland. The women were condemned to indefinite sentences of servitude in The Magdalene Laundries in order to atone for their "sins." She encouraged Commissioners to support this important film.

Treasurer Lesser informed the Commission of her recent retirement from Community Healthy Education Administrator for the Beach Cities Health District. She serves on the Board of the Western State's Heart Association, and informed the Commission that the Western State's Heart Association has scheduled their "Heart Walks" throughout the county on the same date as the CW's 5K Run/Walk.

Commissioner Cooperman attended a Separation of Church and State meeting where the topic of discussion was the current Administration's effort to advocate for policies that would allow religious organizations to compete with secular organizations for federal funding. She also attend the conference "Seeing through the Gender Lens," which included information on foods and cleaning agents that are unhealthy for women.

Commissioner Rodriguez is coordinating with the Department of Children and Family Services on conducting a presentation on how cuts in services will impact single mothers and poor women, and victims of domestic violence.

Commissioner Carpenter-McMillan spoke of legislation she supported and was signed into law in 1996 that allows for chemical castration of repeat child molesters upon release from prison. She stated that to her knowledge not one California judge has imposed the law. President Jernigan asked staff to arrange for a presentation by an appropriate law enforcement or judiciary agency regarding the news articles about child molesters mentioned in her President's Report.

#### **MATTERS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA**

There were none.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **COMMISSIONERS**

Ruth Jernigan, President  
Charlotte Lesser, Treasurer  
Roslyn Cooperman  
Ruth Creary, Ph.D.  
Reiko Duba  
Susan Carpenter-McMillan  
Lila Morgan  
Barbara Perkins  
Olivia Rodriguez

### **EXCUSED**

Yolanda Becerra-Jones  
Yvonne Mariajimenez  
Janet Mummey, Esq.

### **UNEXCUSED**

Sophia Esparza  
Brenda C. Smith, M.D.

### **COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES**

Khanh Nguyen, Executive Office  
Jim Corbett, Executive Office  
Cheryl Diaz, Executive Office  
Audra Galang, Executive Office  
Christopher Harris, Executive Office  
Renita Bowlin, Second District  
Barbara Petite, Office of Affirmative Action Compliance